

THE ECONOMY OF INDO-CHINA

result of allowing what should be the work of technicians, backed by **individual** initiative, to fall into the hands of the administration, whose policy inevitably changes with each of its numerous turnovers. For example, the hydraulic agriculture of Cochin-China is well ahead of that country's use of fertilizer and its selection of seeds and plants. Often the wrong regions have been chosen for experimentation, and colonists have individually had to learn at their own expense just what are the local conditions and the right plants for the appropriate place. To supply a consistency which government efforts have heretofore lacked, and to save the colonists many of the blunders which have too often consumed their resources, Pasquier created in 1930 his *Office du Rvs.* The work of this Bureau and that of the *Institut des Beckerches Agronomiques*, as well as the resolution of the 1935 Imperial Conference, have brought to light the amount of potential rice-land still unused. Heretofore there has been overmuch concentration on rich regions already under cultivation, rather than a development of new areas. Eke the **Plaine** des Jones, on the left bank of the Mekong. The effect of the depression on the export trade and the almost repulsively rapid growth of the Tonkinese population have forced these improvements on Indo-China. The drawbacks are naturally its expense and the great scope of the work to be undertaken, but the new wealth that is practically insured as a result of such effort, will probably more than repay the colony for its outlay.

The depression struck the Far Eastern **rice** market late, but with a force that was accentuated by **local** conditions. It naturally varied in time and severity in the different parts of the Union. Cochin-China, as

the exporting country, was obviously the most seriously affected, and there the **price of** rice was driven down to approximately its cost. At the outset the depression hit the commercial organizations, but those groups which had good paddy supplies resisted as long as they could, selling only what was necessary and hoping for a rise in sales prices for what remained. Tonkin and Annam, which consumed what **they** produced, felt the crisis only a year later, and then in an attenuated form*

The first evidence of a breakdown in the power of the rice merchants was the numerous failures among the Chinese **houses**. The Chinese purchasers of paddy, **who** had a seemingly unshakable hold on the rural districts, were steadily losing their grip, and their **disappearance** was making possible a reorganization or die substituting a different system. For the Annamites **this** meant great suffering